

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 807

By Camper

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Jameela O'Karshalla Smith of Memphis.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the untimely passing of Jameela O'Karshalla Smith; and

WHEREAS, Jameela Smith was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for her fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, born on August 27, 1989, Ms. Smith was the daughter of James and Joyce Jones. At a very early age, she exhibited a talent for singing; at the age of three, she was featured in the Memphis newspaper *The Commercial Appeal*, and, at the age of four, she was the youngest member of her family gospel group, Something Special; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Smith lent her vocal talent to various choirs, including the Stop The Violence Choir, the gospel choir at Kirby High School, where she was a student, and the All-West Tennessee Choir; she was also a member of Echoes of Truth at Overton High School; and

WHEREAS, after graduating from high school, Ms. Smith joined her brother's group, DMP, and traveled the world; she later formed her own gospel group, Essence, with three other young ladies; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, Jameela Smith recorded her first gospel single, "Soldier," written by Jeremy Jones, produced by her brothers Jeremy and Jamon, and featuring Pastor Darrel Petties; in 2018, she released a sophomore single, also written by Jeremy, titled "Hallelujah." She also sang background vocals for her grandfather's gospel group, Rev. Wilkins and 3D, from time to time; and

WHEREAS, Jameela Smith was a devout woman of Christian faith; she was baptized at an early age at the Hunter's Chapel Missionary Baptist Church in Como, Mississippi, by her grandfather, the late Reverend John Wilkins, and later became a member of Mt. Pisgah Church in Olive Branch, Mississippi, under the leadership of Pastor Petties; and

WHEREAS, Jameela Smith was deeply devoted to her family, and she always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; she served as a caregiver for her mother after a cancer diagnosis and dedicated her life to bringing joy to her family and friends; and

WHEREAS, in addition to her husband, Vince Smith, she will be lovingly remembered by her sister, Sheri (Fabion) Moore, and three brothers, James (Tweetie) Jones, Jr., Jamon (Sherri) Jones, and Jeremy Jones; and

WHEREAS, she is further survived by her grandmother, Betty Wilkins; loving godmothers, Yolanda Labon, Lateycia Johnson, and Sabrina Deffebaugh; goddaughter, Armani Davis; and a host of aunties, uncles, nieces, nephews, cousins, extended family members, and friends; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Smith leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all her chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Jameela O'Karshalla Smith, reflecting fondly upon her impeccable character and her stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Ms. Smith.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.